

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA
EASTERN DIVISION

No. 4:15-CR-00068-F-5

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

JORGE ESPINOSA,

Defendant.

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ORDER

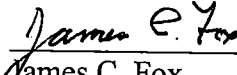
This matter is before the court on Defendant Jorge Espinosa's letter dated February 17, 2016 [DE-116], which the court construes as a motion to appoint new counsel. A hearing was held in this matter on February 19, 2016 in Wilmington, North Carolina.

At the hearing, Mr. Espinosa indicated that he and his attorney, Mary Jude Darrow, no longer see eye-to-eye with regard to his case. Specifically, Mr. Espinosa said that he had not received a copy of his discovery and that he felt he had been pushed to accept a plea agreement. Mr. Espinosa acknowledged, however, that he had not been forced to accept the agreement, that he had in fact pled not guilty, and that he intended to proceed to trial. Mr. Espinosa further acknowledged that he and Ms. Darrow were able to communicate effectively with one another. Ms. Darrow informed the court that she has been practicing law for approximately thirty years.

The court finds that there has not been a breakdown of the relationship between Mr. Espinosa and Ms. Darrow sufficient to require appointment of new counsel. Accordingly, Mr. Espinosa's motion for new counsel [DE-116] is DENIED. Mr. Espinosa may represent himself at trial with Ms. Darrow acting as stand-by counsel.

SO ORDERED.

This, the 19th day of February, 2016.



James C. Fox
Senior United States District Judge